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Garvey had ups and downs as NFL players' union boss

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Ed Garvey never did possess the steely-eyed stare you might expect from a tough-talking labor leader. Maybe that's why he had so much trouble with the National Football League.

Five years later, he really looks the same, somewhat professorial and certainly not much like a union zealot.

Garvey stood in front of a room full of attorneys in Milwaukee recently, discussing the ills of the player agent business.

It is a subject with which he is familiar from his previous incarnation as executive director of the NFL Players Association.

Garvey's old union is little more than a week away from another strike, but don't blame this one on him.

Garvey is spending his time campaigning for a U.S. Senate seat from Wisconsin and, in the wake of the Norby Walters scandal, conducting seminars to recruit a better class of agents for his old constituents.

It is impossible to consider the implications of an NFL strike without thinking of Garvey, who orchestrated a series of walkouts, beginning in 1974 and culminating in the 57-day interruption in 1982 - the longest strike in professional sports history.

"It was an emotional roller coaster," Garvey said.

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